

**BOARD MATTER**  
**July 12, 2004**  
**COMMUNITY DIALOG**  
**on**  
**GANG ACTIVITY & REVITALIZATION ISSUES**  
**in the Heritage/Annandale Area of Braddock District**  
**FINAL REPORT**

Mr. Chairman, at our February 9<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting, I reported on plans for a **Braddock District Community Dialog Series on Gang Activity & Revitalization Issues**. Our office has been hosting “Community Dialogs” for about the past three years. Each program in a Dialog series includes an educational element, followed by community discussion. By the end of the series, Dialog attendees who have participated in most of the programs, and learned about the complexities of the issues, qualify as “Voting Members” of the Dialog and, as “informed voters,” adopt final recommendations.

All together, about 300 people participated in our Community Dialog on Gang Activity & Revitalization. At our first meeting on February 11<sup>th</sup>, the audience adopted a Mission Statement, which is attached. In the Mission Statement, the group agreed to limit the scope of Dialog Recommendations to the Heritage/Annandale area, in order to have end products that could be specific and manageable. By the end of the five-part series, 50 people had attended at least four of the five programs and qualified as Voting Members.

In addition to the Community Dialog series, our office hosted a weekend “Community Engagement” exercise, which was held on May 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>. This activity was facilitated by officials from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community-Oriented Policing Services.

Participants included many individuals already active in the Community Dialog, along with an expanded list of stakeholders in the County identified as having a role, or potential role, in addressing the emergence of gang activity in the Annandale area and beyond.

The Community Dialog ended on June 9<sup>th</sup> with the adoption of a slate of five top recommendations. My Spring Town Meeting on June 23<sup>rd</sup> summarized the Community Dialog and included, as panelists, a number of our Discussion Leaders. Members of the panel described the series, what they learned and how recommendations were reached. This meeting is being broadcast on our Cable Channel 16 at 8 PM on the evenings of: July 16<sup>th</sup> and July 19<sup>th</sup>. Videotapes are also available in my office.

Detailed recommendations from the Dialog are attached. In short they are:

- Revitalize Heritage/Annandale neighborhoods and defunct community association structures.
- Establish stronger school-community partnership.
- Coordinate communication and outreach to the community for understanding gang activity and promoting awareness of intervention and prevention resources.
- Establish job/employment programs for young people in the Annandale area.
- Increase and enhance community policing/presence in Heritage/Annandale.

Mr. Chairman, I believe these recommendations very closely reflect the direction your County-wide anti-gang initiative is taking. Already a number of activities, focused in the Heritage/Annandale area, are underway as a result of the Community Dialog. If there is no objection, Mr. Chairman, I ask that recommendations of the Dialog be circulated to County agencies and departments that can assist with following up on these efforts. Additionally, I would ask that the core group of 50 “Voting Members” of the Dialog be invited to come before the Board of Supervisors, at the soonest appropriate date, to be thanked for their significant investment in our community.